



SUGGESTIONS

RESPECTING THE INTENDED PLAN

OF

MEDICAL REFORM,

RESPECTFULLY OFFERED

TO THE

Legislature and the Profession.

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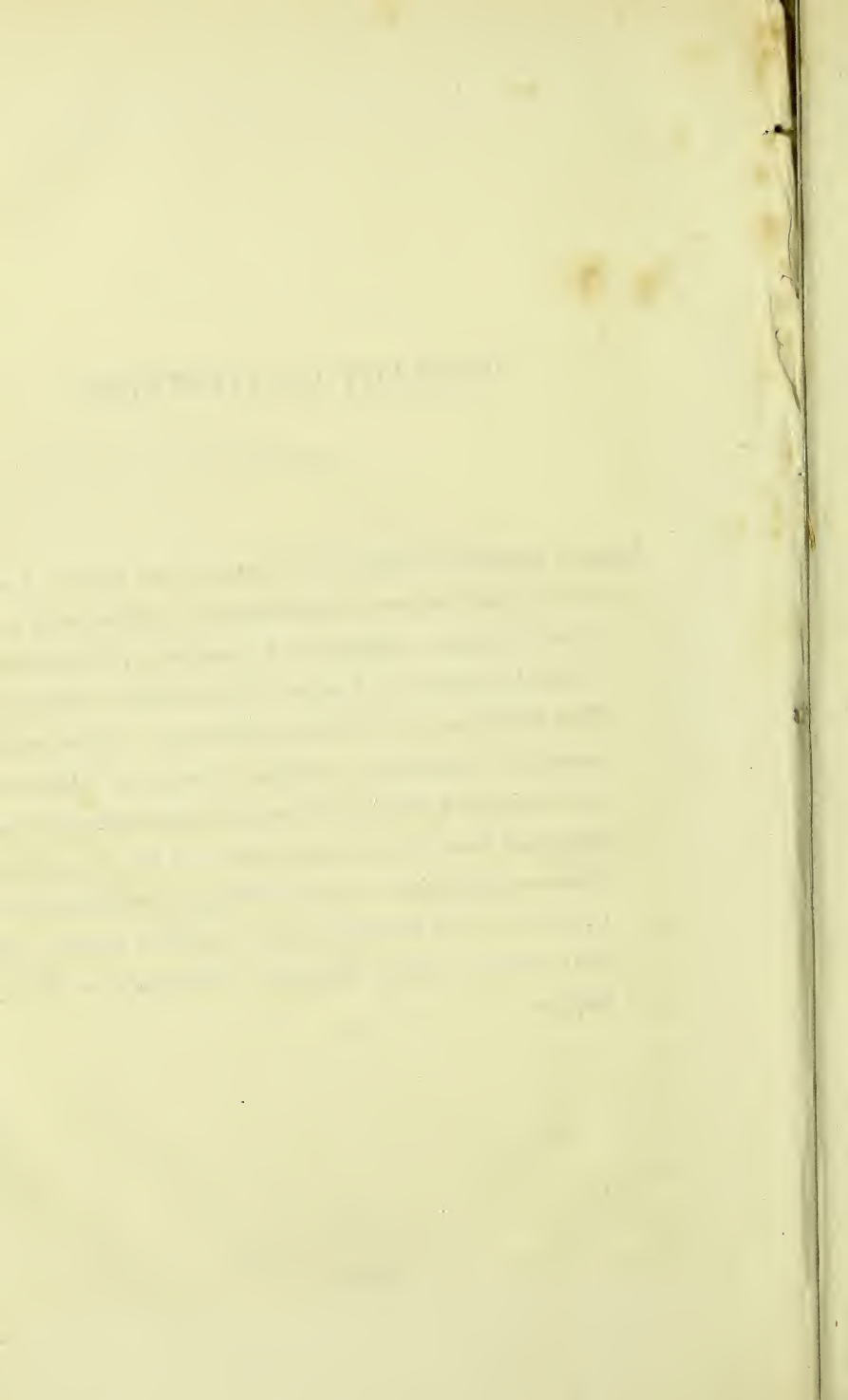
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SUGGESTIONS

RESPECTING THE INTENDED PLAN OF

MEDICAL REFORM.

THE inquiry into the state of the Medical Profession by a Committee of the House of Commons, and the presumed object of its labors, that of determining a plan for regulating and improving the Profession, cannot be viewed with indifference by its Members. And if the character of the Medical Profession, the prevention of its degradation, and the means of elevating it, be deemed objects worthy of serious attention, it will scarcely be denied, that for any safe conclusion we must first determine, What *the Profession ought to be according to its ultimate aim?*

Now, a *liberal profession* may be defined as “the

application of science by the actual possessors of the same to the needs and commodities of social man; that is, by a *learned class*, among whom, as far as the boundaries of existing knowledge extend, *skill* is grounded on, or accompanied by *insight*." And we may add that the cultivation of science, for its own sake, as the predominant *aim*, can alone entitle that class to the rank of gentlemen, and must ever constitute the essential difference between a *profession* and a *trade*: for as in the latter, the *art* is rightfully considered exclusively as the means of gain, so the former must inevitably be degraded into a trade, whenever mercenary and sordid motives supersede the *scientific aim*.

These positions are strictly applicable to the *Medical Profession*. We demand of all its members scientific aims and objects; we denounce as empirics, those who neglect or disclaim science; we reject as tradesmen, those for whom the Profession is only a lucrative business; and we brand as quacks, those who dishonestly make it the means of levying a tax on the hopes and fears of the ignorant and credulous.

We may assume, then, that in the establishment and maintenance of a Medical Profession, the aim of those, who regulate its affairs, must be that of forming a learned class, united in the common object of the cultivation of that *science*, the application of which

to the “needs and commodities” of social man, forms the distinctive character of its members. And it will be evident that as the needs and commodities here referred to are the preservation and re-establishment of the *health* of the community, under whatever circumstances it may be threatened or injured; the first requisite in supplying them will be an adequate number of skilful PRACTITIONERS. And if the qualifications for being admitted as such are to be in relation to the dignity and efficiency of the Profession according to its ultimate aim, it will scarcely be denied that they should consist in — 1st, The possession of *technical knowledge* and *skill* in that degree, which shall enable each member of the Profession to apply all the resources of art, which the whole Profession can supply. 2dly, *Scientific insight*, or the possession of the knowledge of those laws or rational grounds, which form at once the principles and ultimate aims of all professional knowledge. And 3dly, *The character of a gentleman*, that his conduct shall be the pledge and proof that he pursues his profession as a liberal science, and that in all his dealings both with his patients, his professional brethren, and the community, he is ever guided by the principles of strict professional honour.

It is, however, evident that the formation of a *Professional Class*, such as we have ventured to describe it, can be effected only by an adequate

system of instruction and discipline, by an education fitted to secure the grounds and supply the plan and materials of professional excellence. It is beyond our present attempt to offer in detail an efficient system ; but it will be seen that in any proposal for the stability and improvement of the profession, the nature of the *institutions* for *instruction*, and the character and qualifications of the *teachers* will present a subject of deep interest, inasmuch as it involves the very ground and condition of the efficiency of the Profession. And it is under this feeling that we propose to devote a considerable portion of this essay to the consideration of *these requisites of a medical education*.

But having pointed out the preceding indispensable conditions of the maintenance of a medical class or order, namely the supply of duly qualified practitioners and the means of forming such by suitable schools and efficient teachers, we must now advert to a third, and no less important condition, both of the stability of the Profession itself, and of its vital connexion with the national interests ; — I mean the establishment of a *governing body, council or college*, for regulating the affairs and protecting the professional interests ; and emanating from and responsible to the Government of the country for the efficiency of the Profession, and for the performance of its duties private, as well as national.

And if, as cannot be doubted, it be the duty of a Government to provide for the well-being of social man in his relations and duties as a citizen, by supplying the requisites for his *moral cultivation*, his *social security*, and his *health*, it will not be denied that the *Medical Profession* is no less a matter of national concern and moment than the *Church* and the *Law*. And this will be more apparent if we consider the functions that may be rightfully entrusted to, and the duties that may be legitimately exacted from, the Medical Profession as the *guardians* of the *public health*, — functions and duties however, which cannot be performed by the members of the Profession except as parts of one organised whole, represented, animated, and directed by an effective *governing body*. A governing body of this kind (formed as we shall hereafter explain), would form a Council for deliberating on all matters relating to the Profession at large, for regulating the education, for determining and ascertaining the qualifications of candidates desirous of admission as members, and for taking cognizance of irregularities in the professional conduct of unworthy members. A body might thus be constituted in the service of the State, with whom the Government might consult, and to whom the country would look for advice and assistance in all matters appertaining to the health of the community. And to a National Council of Medicine of this des-

cription might be entrusted the government and supervision of the *practical departments* of the profession.

We have thus endeavoured to point out the subjects of paramount importance in any inquiry relating to the improvement of the Profession, namely, the *education*, the *regulation* of the *practical departments*, and their *government*. We shall offer some observations on each of these; [and, first, on the subject of *medical education*, and its most indispensable requisites, viz :

1. The knowledge of *words*, their definite import and right use, as grounded in grammar, and evinced by a *correct style*.

2. The knowledge of the elements of *mathematical science*, as the discipline of the pure sense.

3. The knowledge of *experimental science*, as affording the requisite discipline of the senses.

4. The knowledge of *logic*, as the laws of right reasoning, the forms of all legitimate conclusion, and the criterion of truth and falsehood.

5. The knowledges properly *medical*, grounded on physics, physiology, and psychology.

6. The cultivation of the *morals*, and the formation of habits of *gentlemanly feelings and conduct*.

And we proceed to offer some remarks in justification and explanation of the scheme here offered, both as it respects the ground of its adoption, and the mode of its attainment.

If the foundation be not firm, the superstructure cannot be secure. Unless the early education be such as to impress clearly, strongly, and thoroughly, the common elements of all scientific knowledge, the attempt to engraft upon it a sound medical education will be fruitless. But it would be a mere waste of time to insist upon the necessity, or demonstrate the advantages, of a sound *preliminary education*, as the indispensable preparation for the medical, no less than for every other liberal profession.

In relation, however, to our particular subject, we may observe, that in *boyhood* we may expect the education of the *senses* and of the *memory*; and as its reward, the attainment of *quickness*, *retentiveness*, *ordonnance* of mind, and finally, *good sense*. And, not to dilate on the importance of those sciences, the elements at least of which are to form parts of the preparatory education for a Profession eminently requiring the powers of steadfast reflection and correct observation, we may assume at once that the attainment of the *Greek* and *Latin languages*, of the *elements of mathematics*, numeral and geometrical, with the adjuvant accomplishments of *correct style*, and (to which we should attach a high value in the education of a medical man) of *design* or *drawing*, as far as the accurate knowledge and delineation of *shape* is concerned,—we may assume that these

attainments should be realized previously to the pupil's commencing his proper medical studies.

At the age of sixteen, we may presume that the faculties of the *understanding* and the *judgment* will have been sufficiently matured to call for their proper disciplinary exercise. Now as mathematics are the universal and necessary forms of sensuous experience, so does *logic* teach the universal and necessary forms, and the discipline of the understanding. And as the cultivation of the latter is most essential to the Medical Student, we may be permitted to express the value we entertain of it as teaching the power of *words*, and their definite import, the forms of all legitimate conclusion, and the criteria of truth and falsehood, as far as these are given by the understanding itself, or derivable from the knowledge of its constitution, laws, and inherent forms. With the *higher mathematics*, with the science of *philosophic grammar*, and with *logic*, might close the course of the general knowledges requisite for and common to all the professions, and laying the foundations for the commencement of the studies properly medical. And thus, if in boyhood the exercise of the senses, in order to the education of the sense, be our especial aim, in youth the object would be the cultivation of the understanding, and its expected result the development of the *judgment*.

But here the question will suggest itself, that if up

to the age of sixteen years, the elementary education of the pupil may be provided for in schools or similar instructions; *where* and by *what means* the requisites of the latter period and higher stage, are to be attained? And we anticipate no reasonable ground of objection in stating it as our opinion, that in *universities* and *colleges*, a medical education may be best grounded on those universal elements of science, which are the essential constituents of every *liberal* profession; and that a medical education cannot be complete, or even adequate, except in such institutions, where alone *discipline* both moral and intellectual, *systematic instruction*, and a pledged *direction* and *supervision* of the studies, can give the requisite security for the progress and completion of the student's labours.

This view will be strengthened by considering the nature and *intention* of a *university*. A university may be described as an institution for the continued succession of a class of *Viri liberales*, of gentlemen: 1st, of men imbued with the liberal sciences; 2d. of professional men, who, in full possession of a liberal science, apply it to the needs and benefits of their fellow citizens. And as the universal needs for the well being of social man may be comprised in his *social security*, his *moral cultivation*, and his *health*,—it follows that the professional class will assume the three distinctive characters of the *three universal*

professions, the *Legal*, the *Theological*, and the *Medical*. The number of universities in a country must vary, and may be advantageously augmented under the increase of wealth, population, and empire ; and it cannot but happen that locality and other circumstances, will give to one university an advantage in reference to one of the professions, to another the advantage in respect of another ; but their object will be a *liberal education*, the cultivation of the sciences, as the grounds of the professions, that is, an education founded in each on a special science, but with the common bond in all, that the several sciences are branches of that universal science, the essence of which being the reason, tends to give distinct insight and ultimate aim to all professional knowledges. Nor can it be deemed of slight importance, that those destined for the medical profession, should partake of that education which is required in common for the liberal professions, as an integral part of the gentry of the country, with the sense and habits of a common training in their duties, moral and religious, in their obligations as citizens, and in their sentiments of professional honour as gentlemen. And it may be added that thus only, by means of these national institutions, may the professions be fraternized, and a gentry be formed capable of constituting the moral strength of a country.

We have hitherto abstained from applying the

principles which we have sought to establish, in order at once to give distinctness and obtain for them a dispassionate examination; but we must now request the reader to carry them with him to the consideration of the actual state of medical education in England, and its metropolis.

Now it cannot be doubted that the numerous hospitals of London afford a field for medical observations and experience probably unequalled, but which assuredly is nowhere surpassed. These advantages have indeed been so fully understood, that numerous students flock yearly to the metropolis to partake of these benefits: nay, the great majority of the Practitioners to whom is entrusted so much of the weal and woe of populous England, her fleets, her armies, and her widely spread colonies—the great majority confessedly depend for their education upon the Metropolitan Schools. And yet it is melancholy to reflect, that in a matter of the highest national concern, these vast opportunities have been in a great measure neglected as an object of *national* interest, have been left without the pale of legislative controul and guardianship, to private interests, or abandoned to the casualties of individual caprice, the intrigues of ambition, or the shifting currents of the ballot-box—that is, to decisions which might fairly claim confidence, if the pecuniary subscription which secured the right of voting could

confer likewise the judgement and knowledge requisite for its right exercise.

It is not, however, our purpose to undertake the offensive and painful task of exposing the defects of a system, the abuses and errors of which have been, in a great measure corrected by the increased intelligence of the Profession, and of the community. It will suffice for our purpose, if we briefly advert to the most obvious defects that result from the present plan of education in England and its metropolis, viz. :

1st. The *competency* of the *Teachers* is subjected to no test or proof; and the establishment of schools and the appointment of teachers are left to the caprice or predilections of the Treasurers and Governors of Hospitals, or are the results of private speculation and individual self-interest.

2dly. Relatively to the general practitioner, the great majority of the Profession, the utterly *inadequate period* assigned for the acquisition of the competent skill and knowledge, when in two years the students are expected to obtain all the requisites for safe practisers of a most complex and difficult art.

3dly. The *negligence* too often permitted in enforcing even a decorous, much less a close and unremitting attendance during their studies.

4thly. The *insufficiency* of the *examinations* of which a Diploma or Licence is to be the reward, as a test of the competency of the candidate, — this too being

the only pledge to the public that the candidate for practice is duly qualified.

No objection will, we apprehend, be offered to this view from a consideration of the education appropriate to each class or branch of the Profession, since the negligences and defects are in their consequences common to all. It applies especially to the most numerous class, the *General Practitioners*, in respect of whom we might to the above list of defects, add the injurious enforcing of *apprenticeships*, that most grievous obstacle to a liberal and truly professional education; the removal of which, together with the final separation of the Medical Practitioner, of whatever degree or title, from the trader in drugs and servile compounder of recipes and prescriptions, is to be earnestly wished alike for the patient's sake and the practitioners', by all who do not advocate the retention of names under a total change and revolution of the persons and circumstances. But, in all the essentials of their education, the candidate for the honour of becoming a Fellow of the College of Physicians, and he who wishes to become a Surgeon to an Hospital, are under the same conditions as the General Practitioners, that is, with scarcely any other obligation than their own sense of duty in adding to the forms of study, the substance of knowledge. Much, no doubt, has already been done to ameliorate and improve the education of students, and in

this respect we cannot but advert with satisfaction to the Regulations of the Society of Apothecaries : but it would require other boldness than that of truth to assert that all has been done, that might and should be done, to place the Profession on that footing of confidence and respectability, which both its own interests and those of the community demand. And surely no more favourable opportunity, no more urgent occasion of improving the condition of the Medical Profession can offer itself than the present, when the ranks are becoming yearly augmented, and are in danger of being so over-crowded, that not only individual skill must be held in low estimation in proportion to the numbers, but that a temptation, which too many will interpret as a justifying necessity, is offered for laying traps for the public favour by those low arts and disgraceful tricks of rivalry, which, if unchecked, must inevitably, sooner or later, bring the Profession itself into disesteem and disgrace.

One of the consequences however of the want of patronage of the Government and of legislative protection towards the Metropolitan School of Medicine is too important to be passed over without especial notice. It has created a numerous body of practitioners, who have sought away from home that, which their native institutions denied, — the *degrees* conferred at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dublin,

and the Continental Universities. And thus they have been obliged to forego the advantages, the superior advantages of this metropolis; nay, many have been sent from London and its vicinity, merely to acquire the name which is to give them credit with the public, and then have returned to practise their profession in the place, which every motive of interest to themselves and of advantage to the public would have induced them never to quit. If, further, it should be admitted (as can scarcely be denied) that our own Universities, Oxford and Cambridge, no longer supply the means, or at least the requisite facilities and encouragements of medical education : if, on the other hand, it be admitted that London offers the most unequivocal, the all but unique opportunities of medical study and observation,—but which without any organised system tend so little to the advantage of the Profession—and if the constitution of a well informed Medical Profession, based on a correspondent science, be a matter of *national* concern and moment :—then it follows demonstrably, that a *National Institution in London for the whole* education of such a Profession is imperatively needed and demanded ; and we have only further to consider the organization of such a plan as shall be commensurate with the importance of the object proposed.

Now if the positions maintained in the preceding

pages be well-grounded, we anticipate no objection to the proposal of establishing in London a *University*—a university being alone capable of affording systematic instruction, a discipline that is the pledge of moral conduct and gentlemanly feelings, and alone fitted to maintain the alliance of the professions and the unity of a learned class. We would however here only speak of the proposed *University* in relation to the Medical Profession, and as *peculiarly medical*; and it is obvious that a Metropolitan Institution of this description in accordance with the demands of the age, and eminently favoured by the peculiar advantages which its position as metropolitan affords, would combine the opportunities of *medical experience*, with all the advantages of study and information in all the departments of *natural knowledge*—with all the capabilities of supplying the long felt desideratum of an *English National Medical University*—with all the conveniences and requisites of a metropolitan location. It is, however, no less clear, that such an institution would fail in realizing the benefit it was intended to bestow, unless it could assert the rank and privileges inherent in a national University (and no institution not national can strictly deserve that name), by conferring such *honours* and *distinctions* as shall certify and guarantee the rightful claim of the possessor to the confidence of their countrymen in their professional capacity: and no

less clear that such distinctions must be worse than empty, unless they bear a *national* character, as conferred by virtue of a Royal Charter, and thus derived from the Sovereign Authority. In order to supply then, these requisite conditions, we propose that the London School of Medicine be united as *The Metropolitan University, under the control and regulation of the Governing Council of the Medical Profession, (or Medical Synod) with the power of conferring Degrees.*

We propose further that the University should consist of a sufficient number of *colleges*, in each of which should be established a *school* for elementary instruction; a *senior department* for instruction in those knowledges which are common to all the professions, the proper objects of collegiate education, and heretofore named the Liberal Arts and Sciences; and a *medical department* for the studies properly medical; and these provided with their due appointment of *professors* and *teachers*. It will be seen then that these colleges being furnished with an elementary school, would supply all the advantages of comprehending and directing the whole process of education from the initiation to the completion. And we cannot but regard it as highly desirable that the students, after passing their noviciate, should be provided with the means of residing within the walls of their college, that at least a wholesome check and

restraint might be afforded against temptations which must assail them, and the yielding to which would embitter their future life.

We shall now proceed briefly to lay before the reader the outlines of a *Plan of Education* which, with the requisite encouragements, might be adopted in the *Metropolitan University*.

That *two orders of honorary distinctions*, each comprehending *two degrees*, be instituted. The *first order* being intended to designate attainments in *general education*, and in *universal and natural science*: and the *second order*, attainments in *knowledge* strictly *professional or medical*. And they should consequently form *four grades* which might be entitled. 1. *Inceptor-Graduate in mathematical and physical science*. 2. *Graduate in mathematical and physical science*. 3. *Inceptor-Graduate in physiology*. 4. *Graduate in physiology*.

That *three of these grades* or designations, should be employed to mark the proficiency required in three stages or periods of *medical education*. 1. That the degree of Inceptor Graduate in mathematical and physical science should imply an adequate preliminary education. 2. The degree of Inceptor Graduate in physiology should mark the completion of a course of three years of professional study and proficiency in the knowledges required. And 3dly, That the degree of Graduate in physiology

should be the guarantee of a fully completed medical education. It will be noticed that the degree of Graduate in mathematical and physical science, is not noticed as requisite ; but we think that such a distinction might be advantageously adopted (with defined attainments) for those, whether of the medical profession or not, who are desirous of distinguishing themselves in any of the departments of natural knowledge, or of the arts of civil life, and of thereby giving to these a scientific and professional character.

That the scheme of instruction for those intended for the Medical Profession in accordance with these views, should be ordered in the following manner :

1. The *initiatory* and *elementary education* of the *schools* : the Greek and Latin languages, the elements of mathematics, &c. with *drawing*, and with an introduction to the study of nature, as far as the facts may be presented to the senses.

2. That the student *at the age of sixteen*, after undergoing an examination in proof of his competency should *matriculate*, and pursue his studies in the *senior department* of one of the colleges, during *two years*. But we are of opinion that there would be a great advantage in making the two years of this period *transitional*, so that the youth intended for the Medical Profession might attend the courses of lectures on chemistry, botany, materia medica, natural

history, experimental philosophy, and receive instruction in *pharmacy*. And we are persuaded, that in that time, a youth of average talent might acquire all the profitable knowledges and manipulations for which hitherto a five years apprenticeship has been demanded.

3. That at *eighteen years of age* the student's proper medical studies should commence, having shewn previously to his admission into the Medical School, in an *examination* instituted for that purpose; his proficiency in those branches of study described as the necessary preparation for a medical education, and having, as the certification of the same, received the degree of INCEPTOR-GRADUATE of MATHEMATICAL and PHYSICAL SCIENCE.

But however advantageous such a course of study must be, blending as it does, the professional with the general education; yet obvious reasons would induce us to offer no objection to admitting students solely for their medical education, who had not undergone the preparatory discipline that the junior and senior departments of the college offer. But we have no hesitation in saying that every candidate for matriculation as a medical student, should shew by an examination for that purpose that his general education had been such as to have given him a due proficiency in those branches of study which we have described as the necessary preparation for

medical education, at least a competent knowledge of Greek and Latin, (of the latter at all events;) mathematics, and of logic; and that he should be provided with sufficient testimonials of his moral character and conduct. And farther, that in order to his obtaining the degree of Inceptor-Graduate of mathematical and physical science, he should pass one year, at least, in the senior department. These regulations might indeed be dispensed with, if any tantamount course of education had been completed in any other recognized university, as by admission *ad eundem*, practised in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

4. That the *first course of studies properly medical* should then commence at eighteen, in anticipation of the degree of *Inceptor-Graduate of Physiology*, and should occupy *three years*, appropriated as follows:

FIRST ACADEMICAL YEAR

Should be devoted to the lectures on *anatomy* and *physiology*, to the *anatomical demonstrations*, and to *practical dissections*:—further, to a continued attendance on the lectures on *chemistry*, *materia medica*, *botany*.

SECOND ACADEMICAL YEAR

Should carry on the instruction by the lectures on *anatomy*, *physiology*, and *demonstrations*, with *dissections*:—and in addition to these, attendance should be required to the lectures on the *practice of medicine*, on *surgery*, on *midwifery*, on *clinical lectures on medicine*, on *hospital practice*, with the registering of *medical cases*.

THIRD ACADEMICAL YEAR

Should bring to a close the courses on the *practice of medicine*, on *surgery*, and *midwifery*;— with addition or accompaniment of lectures on *medical jurisprudence*, on *clinical surgery*, on *hospital surgical practice*, with the recording of *surgical cases*.

It may be further observed, with respect to these studies, that the courses of lectures on anatomy, medicine, and surgery, should occupy at least six months; and that the student should have had the opportunity of performing the *operations of surgery* on the subject, and of *treating* a certain number of *obstetrical, medical, and surgical cases*, in an hospital, under proper superintendence.

Again, during the whole attendance of the student on these branches of study, his *presence* at the different lectures is to be *registered*, and his absences duly noticed; his diligence tested by frequent *examinations*; and at the close of the academical period his proficiency ascertained in an *examination* by the *Faculty of the College* jointly. This examination might be assisted in by *assessors* from the Governing Council of the Medical Profession. And should he pass through his examinations with approbation, he should then receive the degree of INCEPTOR-GRADUATE OF PHYSIOLOGY.

The above comprises the *education* of the *general practitioner*, as fitting him to practise medicine, sur-

gery, and midwifery ; and, having received his degree, the graduate might then be subjected to an examination by the Governing Council of the Medical Profession, which, having been satisfactorily passed, he might, at the age of twenty-one, become enrolled as a *Licentiate* of the *Medical Profession*, and receive his diploma as a licensed general practitioner.

But, in thus laying down a plan of medical education, we are aware that we have but offered the means of supplying the most pressing needs of the community ; and we are ready to admit, that we have not, in the foregoing scheme, provided an adequate system for training up a body of men capable of forming a Profession of Medicine in which the *science* may have continued growth and access. A more extensive scale of education must be provided for those whose time, talents, opportunities, and means, will enable them to fit themselves for the higher departments of the profession, whose practice would be carried on in the metropolis and larger towns, who would fill the offices of physicians and surgeons to hospitals, and who would regard the appointment of teacher or professor as an object of honourable aim and of desirable distinction. For such, it is abundantly plain that the same preliminary education and course of studies must be prescribed as the essential preparation, and no less that

they should have received the degree of *Inceptor-Graduate of Physiology*. But as the reward of superior proficiency and attainments, we propose to offer for such the additional and higher grade of *Graduate of Physiology*, and that the *second curriculum* of medical studies, in anticipation of the higher degree, should occupy *three years*.

For this academical term, intermediate between the degrees of Inceptor-Graduate and of Graduate in Physiology, it can scarcely be necessary to lay down further for the candidate any particular routine or order of study. But as the subsequent examination on the final completion of his studies would be more strict and extensive, it would behove him to perfect his knowledge of the different branches of study already stated as indispensable; and it should be insisted on that he give his attendance sedulously on *hospital practice* during the term; that, as a test of his diligence, he furnish a series of *clinical reports*, both of medical and surgical cases; and we do not hesitate to say, that we deem it little less than indispensable that he should have given proofs of his skill in the treatment of patients assigned to him for that purpose, under the superintendence of the proper officers of an hospital. Further, we cannot but think it highly desirable that he should undergo an examination of his acquaintance with the writings of those authors who mark the great epochs of the *history*

of *medical science*; and that he should have attended a course of lectures on *comparative physiology*, and a course of lectures which should embrace a *medical logic*, a *medical psychology*, and the conditions of a *science* and *philosophy of medicine*. And surely, if the legitimate object of medical study be that of establishing a *science* of medicine, it will be necessary, in order to achieve it, that we should ascertain, by observation and comparison, the essential constituents of all living beings; all their possible combinations, under all circumstantial influences, with their results; and no less so, the manifestations of mind, and the mutual influences of life and mind;—further, that we should be fully possessed of the rules of observation, and the criteria of truth and falsehood, in order to guard against errors in our generalizations and judgments;—and finally, that we should seek that which is universal and necessary, in order to the enunciation of those causative principles and immutable laws which are manifested in the living forces and their aberrations. More than an allusion to this subject would be here out of its place; but we cannot but regret that, even in that part of it for which the most ample materials have been provided by the genius of Mr. Hunter, the study of comparative anatomy has been almost wholly neglected in the London medical education.

We have assigned *three years*, as the period inter-

mediate between the conferring of the degree of Inceptor-Graduate of Physiology, and that of Graduate of Physiology, which we think should not be granted till the candidate be *twenty-four years of age*. At this time the proficiency of the candidate might be determined by proper examinations, which might consist, 1st, of his acquaintance with the writings of those authors, who mark the great epochs of the history of medicine; 2d, in Physiology; 3d, Pathology; 4th, in Therapeutics:—and lastly, by writing, and defending a thesis. And these having been satisfactorily accomplished he should then receive the degree of *Graduate in Physiology*.

It will be here however right to observe that although we would recommend no essential difference in the studies and attainments requisite for the degree of Graduate in Physiology; yet that we contemplate no change in the practical distinctions, which the conveniences of society have unalterably established, of *physican* and *surgeon*. And in behoof of this distinction we would suggest that the examination in *therapeutics* be at the option of the candidate *medical* or *surgical*, and that correspondently thereto, during the prescribed period of study for the degree, the *medical candidate* should have devoted his attention to medical practice in an hospital, and the *surgical candidate* should have been a *dresser* at an hospital.

The candidate having thus taken his highest collegiate degree, his next business will be to obtain a *license to practise* from the General Council of the Medical Profession. His claim to such will be determined by suitable examinations; and being admitted, he will receive his Diploma, and become enrolled under the title of *Doctor in Medicine*, or *Master in Surgery*. The latter title is chosen in order to mark for the public the practical distinction intended. But no less, likewise, it would be desirable for the cultivation of scientific *midwifery*, that there should be practitioners who would especially devote themselves to this branch of medicine; and we propose that the Graduate in Physiology, should, so desiring it, be admitted to an examination in midwifery, provided he had devoted three years to its practical study, and that having satisfactorily passed his examinations, he should receive a Diploma as *Doctor in Medicine and Midwifery*.

Thus then the practical distinctions in the medical profession would be:— 1. *Licentiates in Medicine, Surgery, and Midwifery*, or General Practitioners: 2. *Doctors in Medicine* or Physicians: 3. *Masters in Surgery*: 4. *Doctors in Medicine and Midwifery*;—distinctions which would cause no departure from usage, which custom, founded on the experience of public convenience, has sanctioned. But with these obvious advantages: 1st, that their education would be

founded in common upon a scientific basis; 2nd, that their qualifications would be accurately ascertained; 3rd, that the degrees instituted would, as marks of merit and attainments, confer both honour on the possessor and respectability on the profession; 4th, that, as the lowest member of the profession could by extending his education attain to the highest honours, there would be no invidious distinctions; 5th, that the general practitioner would be emancipated from the servile drudgery of an apprenticeship, and that this period, passed in idleness or worse, would be devoted to professional instruction, and the cultivation of his mind: and the benefit would be rendered complete, and the professional man for ever separated from the trader, if the general practitioner were authorized to charge for his time, care, and attendances, without being degraded, or even permitted to degrade his profession, by a tradesman's bill, in detail for his particular medicines. And thus, whilst the plan suggested would ever preserve hope for the lowest, it would be the means of fraternizing all, and of producing a bond of unity throughout the Medical Profession.

There is, however, another point, which in any reform of the Profession cannot but be deemed of high importance, and it will be admitted that with whatever care the qualifications of the practitioners be examined, and with whatever success the welfare of

the community be consulted by a supply of able, and skilful practitioners, yet that the science of medicine can alone have growth and access by eminent and highly gifted *teachers*, whose business it is to form the practitioner, and to cultivate the *science* of the profession. We consider it therefore as highly desirable, if not indispensable, that a distinct class or grade of teachers, under the title of *professors*, should be instituted. And we propose that this title should be given to those who had eminently distinguished themselves by superior talents, and attainments, by original researches, discoveries, or works of standard merit. Such persons might be *recommended* as deserving of the honour by *the college* of which they were members, and having given *public proofs* of their capability to teach by delivering a lecture or series of lectures before the General Council of the Medical Profession, they might receive from the latter the dignity of PROFESSOR. It will be understood however, that they must have in addition received a diploma as Doctor or Master. Further, we would recommend that these professors be alone eligible to to the chairs of the metropolitan university, and that they should have the privilege of being accredited as *Private Teachers*, whose testimonials, under proper regulations would be received in part of the education required for the attainment of degrees.

In saying this, however, we candidly admit that we

have no wish to see the continuance and perpetuation of the Medical Schools at hospitals. For 1st, although it is in most instances highly desirable that the teacher should be attached to an hospital, yet it does not follow that the medical officers of an hospital are therefore best fitted for teaching: — 2d, the system is peculiarly liable to the evils of intrigue, favouritism, interest in their appointments; and it will not be denied that the appointments have been made the subject of sale and barter: — 3d, the appointments are for the most part under the controul of persons wholly ignorant of the qualifications required: — 4th, the funds of hospitals are diverted to purposes for which they were never intended. We would not indeed be understood to say, that at a time when teachers were scarce, the office of teaching did not best devolve on and was most profitably exercised by the medical officers of hospitals; but we do not hesitate to assert, that an extended and liberal plan of medical education, suited to the demands of the age, can alone be supplied, with all the requisite adjuncts, by *Collegiate Institutions*. And we may add, that if, in the establishment of a metropolitan university the hospitals, are to form, as they must, an integral part, the officers of the hospitals should be selected according to their qualifications, both as teachers and practitioners, and the

appointments entrusted to the General Council of the Medical Profession.

Having thus, as we conceive, sufficiently, though succinctly, considered the requisites in the education of the Profession, and the distinctions in its practical departments, we proceed to the last part of our task, the examination of the government of the Profession, and the constitution of the Governing Council, to whose functions we have in various parts of this paper briefly alluded.

Now it will be seen by reference to the preceding part of this paper, that we propose the establishment of *a National Council of Medicine for the whole regulation and conduct of the Profession*, at least throughout England. The functions of this Council will evidently be :—1. *The superintendence of the Education* of the Profession, and the regulation of all institutions, colleges, &c., for that purpose. 2. *The regulations of the practical departments* of the Profession for the securing of the public against the mischievous practices of dishonest or ignorant pretenders, and to provide for the public criteria of competence, skill, and integrity, such as even the public shall be capable of distinguishing and applying. 3. *The promoting the cultivation of medicine as a science*, and the adoption of all feasible measures for upholding the dignity and respectability of the profession,

and for *securing its interests* in connexion with the welfare of the community. 4. As an administrative department of the Government of the country, in regulating all matters relating to the *public health*.

It is plain, that a governing body so formed as adequately to execute these important functions, must comprise a sufficient number of the men most distinguished in the Profession for their talents and attainments, and whose character would be a pledge of their fulfilling the important trust confided to them. The first question then, with regard to the constitution of this body, will be *the selection of the component members*.

Now colleges, societies, or institutes, for the protection and promotion of science or the fine arts, are one class of incorporations; the guilds, committees, companies, &c., of political, municipal, or commercial life, are altogether of a different kind. To infer, therefore, that forms, practices, or regulations, which have been found expedient or necessary in the latter, must therefore be beneficially applied to the former, is, to say the least, a hasty presumption. On a fitting occasion, it might well repay the time of a thinking man to draw out the true character of this diversity of kind, and to place it in all the lights of which the subject is susceptible; but, for our present purpose, it will be sufficient to fix the attention on one essential and most characteristic point of dif-

ference. In all incorporations of common life, namely, the body or class of which the corporation is the supposed guardian and representative, is presumed as already existing, and complete. The functions and duties of the corporation are strictly conservative; the interests common to this body, whatever be the trade and calling, and whatever be the comparative number of the class, already exist as common to all the individuals, equally prized by all, and, from their palpable nature, such as may be rationally presumed to be equally understood by all. In deputing, therefore, a certain number of the whole class to watch over the common interests, and to preserve them from foreign encroachment, and from the injuries inflicted by the dishonest selfishness of unworthy associates, the electors can find easy and sufficient criteria in the wealth, extensive dealing, and fair character of the candidate or nominee. It may, therefore, be true, that in such institutions it is right and expedient that the few should be elected by the many; at all events the elective scheme is perfectly congruous with the nature and design of the institute.

Now, if on the other hand, we look into the history of the different great learned or scientific colleges, academies, and institutes of civilized Europe; or if we consider the ends and purposes of their institution; we shall find that the

paramount object has been to create a class not already existing, or to call forth a class existing only under the scum of such imperfections and deformations as necessarily intercepted every form of excellence that might be contained virtually therein. The purpose, I repeat, of the illustrious founders, has been to take advantage of the fortunate accidents of genius, knowledge, and attainments, which the particular age and country had presented, and so to combine these, as that they should work productively as well as influentially on the mass successively subjected to their influence, so as, in the greatest possible degree, to assimilate it to themselves. They were the ferment that was to work in the production of a given body, and not merely to be choice specimens of products already existing. The colleges of learning and science may exercise various functions, and fulfil sundry purposes, which belong to the corporations of common life; but this is their peculiar character, this is that by which they have, and can alone worthily retain, the name of a learned or liberal incorporation—that their characteristic object is prospective, the promotion, the advancement of the science or art, in distinction from, though, thank God, in necessary union with, the interests of scientific men, as individuals. Their characteristic mode of action is to work by descent; they are to be the suns of the system to which they

belong, and not mere mirrors, reflecting only the light that had been previously bestowed ; and their characteristic form, from the very beginning, is by *appointment*—appointment by a higher, in contradistinction from *election* by a supposed lower, or equal.

In every body nominated, whether by one, by few, or by many, both the powers and the interests are determined by those of the nominators. The elector or nominator cannot delegate or confer what he does not himself possess, and with no show of modesty or propriety can he prescribe to another a higher or more comprehensive interest than that which he himself possesses, and by virtue of which he acquires his right of electing or nominating. To the directors of the East India Company, or the Governors of the Bank, the proprietors of India or Bank Stock, collectively, may well and suitably delegate the care of watching over the safety of their capital and the improvement of its yearly proceeds : but that the affairs shall be managed for the benefit of the nation at large, even to the occasional loss or detriment of the particular interest, — that it is the duty of an imperial Government or Legislature to watch over and enforce.

And herein we may find, if I mistake not, an advantage and a happiness of no ordinary kind, in the circumstance under which colleges and institutes of science, learning and the liberal arts have

had their origin. If we look back to their history, we shall find the foundation and the first appointment of the members in the sovereign, or by some high authority, with the express sanction and confirmation of the sovereign power, that is, of the power which, under whatever name, represents the majesty, and the permanent interests of the nation, — not only of the whole community, as at present existing, but of a nation that is bound to contemplate its own immortality, and to prize with equal piety and solicitude its past heraldry and its reversionary rights, the honours of our ancestors and the prospects of our posterity. From a source like this, and from no lower or narrower, can be derived or conferred the authority and the duty of superintending any particular interest, or the interest of any particular class of men, for the *public* good, for the weal of the *nation*.

Another peculiarity in the history of learned bodies in behoof of a profession, and which may be illustrated and exemplified in our own, is this, that the science is, a certain sense, antecedent to the existence of the in profession : such, I mean, as the profession is, and is universally assumed to be, when the practical art, from which the profession borrows its name, exists in connection, with the science. Without anatomy, comparative anatomy, physiology, and pathology, chirurgery assuredly might exist and has existed ; but without these the *profession* of surgeons would not exist, with-

out these the surgeon could have no pretence to be fellow or member of a learned college. Now the consequence of this is, that the interests of the science, in subordination only to the general welfare, become the paramount object to which even the interests of the profession itself is, in a certain sense, subordinate ; for the object of the original founders was to make use of the existing science, in order gradually to create a profession that should hereafter act as an organic body for that science, a body which was to sustain, re-produce, and enlarge the life of the science, by which it was governed and set in motion. Thus the science and the profession were to be alternately cause and effect, means and end. In the third place, follow the interests of the professors as individuals known to society, under the name and marks of the profession ; the respectability, the improvement, the success of each and all of these, are important not only to the individuals themselves, but important to the character of the profession, which again is most important as a means to the growth and progress of the science, and this again of vital importance to the community at large — nay to the interests of all mankind. Appointed therefore by the highest authority, and exercising an influence, which evermore works *a supra in inferius*, till as the product of its own attractive and assimilative action a correspondent ascension gradually takes place, a

college thus framed perfects itself at length into a circle, ever working from above, yet ever returning on itself. Hence it is capable of embracing all the above-mentioned interests in perfect harmony and subordination : whereas in a guild or directory, chosen by the votes and major number of a body already formed, the last and lowest of these interests alone could be pretended or proposed for their efforts and their vigilance, by virtue of any right derived from the electors.

One other essential distinction remains, and cannot be passed unnoticed. The great purpose and object of a learned body is to confer honour, to delegate authority, to give an assurance to the community of competent skill, and that security for high and honourable conduct, which may be afforded by the experienced exclusion or excision from the ranks of the profession of every member proved unworthy, and by the sufficiency of the moral and sciential criteria required, in order to memberships, in the first instance. Now, I think we may venture to assert, that the honours conferred by teachers and tutors, whose own competence thereto had been previously determined by the pupils, would be at least of a very equivocal kind.

Thus then it will appear that the very objects and intentions of learned bodies would be frustrated by popular elections. If it were necessary to multiply the

arguments against popular elections, such might easily be found in the endless turmoil of intrigue and faction, to which open elections would give rise ; and waiving for the moment the principle that popular elections are quite inconsistent with the design and intention of a college, yet, who, I would ask, would virtually exercise the elective franchise ? I know of no other answer to this question than that they would be the *London practitioners*, since it is impossible that the country practitioners, the surgeons of the army and navy, or those resident in our colonies, though equally interested in the welfare of the profession, could attend the elections. And I need not say how unjust any arrangement of this kind would be to those members, and that thus, in pretending to make the elections popular, and give influence to the majority, you would, in fact, give power to the few at the expense of the many : and thus the measure would effectually defeat itself.

Our proposal then, upon the foregoing grounds, is that the governing body should *select* and *appoint its members*, but under a known responsibility to the crown for the conscientious discharge of its functions.

But it will appear from what we have already said in respect of the education of the profession, that these members will form at least, two kinds ; doctors of medicine, and masters of surgery, which might be distinguished as the *medical* and *surgical* FACUL-

TIES. And for these the nuclei have been already formed in the existing *colleges* of *physicians* and *surgeons*, and only such changes in their constitution being required, as the system here offered implies, we would wish still to see these bodies regulating respectively the departments of the profession which they represent; whilst the proposed reformation would be freed from the disadvantages of innovation in a very material point, and the changes we here contemplate greatly facilitated. And with respect to the profession of surgery, it cannot I think but be admitted, that the *cultivation* of *surgery* as a *science* absolutely requires a distinct body or faculty; since the members of those who devote themselves peculiarly to this department of the profession, will be always comparatively few, and the greater number will be an overwhelming majority of general practitioners, who will consider surgery only as subsidiary qualification in their calling, without the opportunity and inducements to pursue it with that zeal and study which its preservation and growth as a *science* requires.

The colleges of physicians and surgeons, or the *medical* and *surgical faculties* of the medical council, would respectively regulate each its practical department of the profession. They would, in boards instituted for that purpose, *examine* into the qualifications of all candidates; the diploma of the doctor in medi-

cine, would be grounded on the examinations in the medical faculty, that of the master in surgery, on examinations by the surgical ; and the licentiate, or general practitioner would submit his claims to *both* faculties ; and the admission to the profession would be granted for all under the authority of the governing council of the profession.

It will be recollected, however, that a third board or faculty will be required, that of *midwifery*, in the practice of which, competent skill and conduct are not less imperatively required, than even in medicine and surgery, and for the regulation of which at present, unfortunately, no provision exists. It will be seen that in the plan for the education of the profession, a class has been provided, that namely of doctor in medicine and midwifery, from wick the most eminent might be selected to form members of the governing council, who might constitute a board for determining the qualifications of those desirous of obtaining the diploma for obstetric medicine, or of those who require this additional qualification as licentiates in medicine, surgery, and midwifery.

We have thus provided in our plan for *three* departments or *faculties*, each with its special office, and adequately constructed for determining the qualifications of those requiring admission to membership of the profession. But perhaps the omission of any distinct board of general practitioners, corres-

pendent to the Society of Apothecaries, cannot be wholly passed over without some notice. It is however evident, that any board for examinations would be wholly unnecessary, as those described above include the means of determining, by those best qualified by their education and attainments, the requisites of the candidates :—any separate board would be unnecessary. But it must likewise be remembered that, if any such board were established, it must consist of those general practitioners who live in London. Now, in respect of the higher departments of the profession, it is abundantly clear, that those of the greatest attainments will be found in the great metropolitan mart of fame and fortune ; but for that very reason, the preoccupation of the posts of honour, namely, it is most likely, as indeed is the fact, that in the class of general practitioners, those most eminent in practice, and the most sedulous cultivators of their profession as a science, will be found elsewhere than in the metropolis.

In the constitution, then, of the general council, we find in the three faculties, three *boards for examinations*, or *committees* for deliberating on, regulating, and conducting the affairs, which specially belong to the departments over which they preside. But we propose that they should not be separate, but collected and united into one body or council, representing the whole medical profession, and that

all matters which concern the profession at large, should be determined on at meetings of the three faculties, and have authority only as arts of the general council of the medical Profession. The council will consist, as before said, of a certain number of *professors, doctors in medicine, masters in surgery, and doctors in medicine and midwifery*. These would be the COUNCILLORS OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION, and as a matter of course, they would elect a *president*, and such *officers* as the duties to be performed would require.

The general meetings of the faculties in Council would in virtue of their jurisdiction relate to the forming of laws regulating the education, and the practice, and for deliberating on the various interests of the profession itself, and on all matters belonging to the public health.

With respect to the plan of education, we have already sufficiently expressed our opinion, to which it would be needless again to refer; but we shall venture to make some remarks on the business of the council in reference to the regulation of the practical departments of the profession, and to the regulation of matters relating to the public health.

1. In relation to the practical departments; we repeat that not only none should practice medicine, surgery or midwifery without their sanction, but that all keepers of houses of reception for lunatics,

all druggists and chemists, and persons serving and compounding medicines, dentists, cuppers, should be obliged to have their qualifications examined and to have a *licence* for their several callings.

Further, that they should have the power of expelling all those from the profession, who by dishonourable practices have rendered themselves unworthy the character of members of a liberal profession, whether it be by the use of secret remedies, by advertizing, by partnerships in trading concerns, by calumnious reports of their professional brethren, breaches of professional confidence, or whatever else may be considered derogatory to a professional character.

2d. In relation to the *public health*, that they should form a body constituted in the service of the state, with whom the government might consult, and to whom the country would look for advice and assistance in all matters appertaining to the health of the community, and to whom all questions relating to epidemics, laws of quarantine, the health of the army and navy, the building of hospitals and prisons, punishments, drainage, sewers, nuisances ; in fine, all questions of medical jurisprudence, state medicine, and police might be referred.

In furtherance of these objects we should see great advantage in establishing *district boards* throughout England, that is, by dividing the country into

districts round all the principal towns, and forming a board in each, by appointing a certain number of the most distinguished practitioners as members. The duty of these boards would be that of inquiring into the qualifications of practitioners, visiting the druggists' shops, the lunatic asylums, prisons, presenting nuisances, and assisting the local magistrates, juries and coroners' inquests in all medical investigations. And these boards should communicate with the general council, be responsible to it, and act under its authority.

There is another office also, which might be entrusted to these local boards, and the absence of which has been a source of grievous injustice to the medical profession, at least if it be acknowledged as a right principle that an Englishman is to be tried by his peers. Hitherto in all actions civil or criminal, against medical men, the cause has been judged by men ignorant of the professional merits involved, and the profession can scarcely demand it as less than a right that they should be protected against the consequences of such ignorance. And we would propose that in every such case, six members of the local board should be conjoined with six of the grand jury, in order to try the merits of the case previously to trial.

We cannot conclude this part of our subject without adverting to another subject which operates in-

juriously, both on the profession, and those for whom our sympathies ought to be especially enlisted, namely, the *sick poor*. It is notorious that a practice has prevailed of requiring tenders for attendance on the parish poor, and of appointing as parish surgeon the lowest bidder, and it is quite plain that the contracts in most instances, are at so low a rate, that the worst and cheapest drugs alone can be given. Now if, as cannot be doubted, it be the duty of a state to provide that every member of its community is, as far as circumstances permit, in that state in which they can alone perform the duties of citizens, it is quite obvious that in this instance, the government and legislature of this country have neglected a most important duty, and this, not only a political duty, but one, the neglect of which is a deep stain on our character as men and christians. And in any reform of the Profession we earnestly exhort the legislature to give authority for levying a tax in every parish and district of England for providing proper medical attendance for the poor, and to require that competent medical attendants be appointed and duly remunerated.

And we will not withhold our opinion that the appointment of *district practitioners*, with the requisite means for relieving the sick poor, would be a highly desirable substitute for *dispensaries*: if these, as we fear, in too many instances, mainly owe their

foundation and support to arts, which, however conducive to the selfish interests and notoriety of individuals, cannot but tend to lower the respectability of the Profession.

Of this, however, as of other subjects, no less important to the improvement of the Profession, our limits will permit no more than a brief notice. We shall be satisfied if we have drawn attention to the necessity of an education, which, in every sense of the word, may be deemed *liberal*; and to the advantages of a co-ordination of the members of the Profession, founded thereon, which, whilst it confers honour and rank on superior attainments, yet might remove all excusable grounds of jealousy and disunion. We would wish that a rank and character should be secured to the general practitioner, as a member of a liberal profession, which will be cheerfully conceded to many individuals no less eminent in practice, than honourably known as sedulous cultivators of science, but which cannot be granted to them as a body, except under the conditions of an enlarged education, and the entire separation of their pursuits from any debasing admixture with trade. But we would here interpose a remark. It cannot but be considered a grievance to the licentiate, or general practitioner, whose years and experience entitle him to the deference of juniors, even if favoured by a more extended education, that a young man fresh

from the schools, and newly equipped with the doctor's degree, should at once, without the privileges of practical knowledge, assume a superiority, and take the lead in any joint consultation; and we are disposed to think that it would be advantageous if the candidate for the Doctor's or Master's degree were to receive at first only a license to practise, in anticipation of the diploma, which might be granted at twenty-seven years of age. We are of opinion, too, that in certain cases the Governing Council should be at liberty to grant, as a *grace*, the degree of Doctor, or Master, to the licentiate in medicine, surgery, and midwifery, without obliging him to pass through the additional forms of collegiate instruction, where his age, attainments, and character, justified such a distinction. And some of these might be appointed members of the Governing Council, as representatives of the interests of the practical department, from which they had been elevated.

At all events, if the great objects of Medical Reform be the scientific cultivation of the Profession, and the moral and gentlemanlike demeanor of the practitioners, it will not be doubted that, in any comprehensive scheme of improvement, the great desiderata will be : — The abolition of medical apprenticeship ; preliminary education, early discipline, and the training of gentlemen ; a comprehensive professional education ; such encouragements and distinc-

tions as may incite to the highest attainments ; sufficient criteria of knowledge and skill in the candidate, and likewise of competency and distinguished attainments in the teachers, such as the public shall be qualified to estimate ; the separation of even the lowest departments of the Profession from a trade or trading company ; and lastly, checks upon unprofessional conduct, and a watchful jealousy of professional honor.

Nor should it ever be forgotten, in any reorganization of the medical profession, that, in establishing a standard of qualification which shall provide an adequate number of competent practitioners to supply the needs of the community, the final aim should be that of providing the requisite encouragements for evolving the highest attainments and greatest excellence.

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